



# CALIFORNIA ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY NEWS RELEASE

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## Department of Toxic Substances Control

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**T - 35 - 05**

For Immediate Release

June 9, 2005

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### **Sting Nets Ten Law Breakers**

**Santa Ana** - - "Got cha!" The California Department of Toxic Substances Control (DTSC) and the Orange County District Attorney's Office have just completed a "sting" operation in Southern California that netted 10 individuals who were willing to pick up and transport hazardous waste illegally.

The sting operation was a cooperative effort between DTSC's Criminal Investigations Branch, the Orange County District Attorney's Office, the Fullerton Police Department, the California Department of Fish and Game, and the Orange County Health Care Agency – Environmental Health Hazardous Materials Response Team.

"This represents a new direction and focus towards proactive environmental enforcement," said DTSC Director B.B. Blevins. "We sought to catch those who flagrantly violate state laws regarding the transportation of hazardous waste. Individuals caught included those who are un-licensed, un-trained, un-registered, and un-insured. Their illegal transportation of hazardous waste poses a significant risk to other drivers, and brings unfair competition to those who legally transport waste in our state", Blevins added.

The "sting" has added another dimension to environmental enforcement efforts. Working jointly with local district attorneys, the sting ensures the safe transport of hazardous waste by taking illegal transporters off the roads. DTSC Criminal Investigators called transporters who regulatory agencies had previously received complaints on or people who were advertising in local newspapers. Many of the suspects placed advertisements of their availability for "hauling" jobs. When they showed up to the site they loaded their vehicles with hazardous waste. After they loaded the waste on their trucks and drove outside the gate of the facility, they were immediately stopped by marked patrol units.

The "sting" netted 10 individuals including an Orange County employee and a Captain with the Downey Fire Department.

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"These are people who pose a potentially serious risk to our community and to our environment," said Orange County Assistant District Attorney Joe D'Agostino. "Part of our responsibility is to alert the public that these laws exist and to inform our residents how and where to properly dispose of hazardous substances."

In addition to other charges, all suspects were charged with the illegal transportation of hazardous waste, a misdemeanor. Such violations of the law are punishable by fines and up to one year in jail.

Previous state administrations have focused on regulating permitted facilities and authorized transporters; however, the Governor's Environmental Action Initiative seeks to level the environmental playing field by fostering an environment in which regulators can go after "illegal transporters and un-permitted facilities".

DTSC regulates the generation, storage, transportation, and disposal of hazardous waste within the State of California. DTSC ensures compliance with the Hazardous Waste Control Laws through regulations, inspections, and criminal investigations.

Business generated hazardous waste must generally be transported by a registered hazardous waste transporter and a California Uniform Hazardous Waste manifest must be used. This helps track shipments and ensures that hazardous waste is properly disposed of. Through the proper handling of hazardous waste, threats to public health and the degradation of the environment can be avoided.

To find out if a hazardous waste transporter is registered or to find additional information about DTSC, please visit DTSC's Web site at [www.dtsc.ca.gov](http://www.dtsc.ca.gov). For complaints involving the illegal dumping, storage, or transportation of hazardous waste, please call 1-800-69-TOXIC.

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**The Department of Toxic Substances Control's mission is to restore, protect, and enhance the environment and ensure public health, environmental quality and economic vitality by regulating hazardous waste, conducting and overseeing cleanups, and developing and promoting pollution prevention.**